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Twenty-First Report

**COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS**

(This report covers the period from
6 July through 16 July 1973)

*This memorandum has been prepared jointly by the
Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.*

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Twenty-First Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS*

(This report covers the period from
6 July through 16 July 1973)

The Key Points

- Three new combat infiltration groups were detected during the week, and at least 3,200 North Vietnamese personnel have now started the infiltration trip south since the 15 June effective date of the Paris Communique (the "second" ceasefire). Of these, 2,700 have been combat troops, and 500 have been specialists.
- Evidence received during the week suggests that one North Vietnamese infantry regiment in northern Laos is returning to North Vietnam.
- North Vietnamese logistic activity continues to follow the normal rainy season pattern of the past several weeks.
- Combat activity remained at fairly low levels in both South Vietnam and Laos.

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The Details

NOTE: This is the twenty-first in a series of reports detailing recently received evidence of (I) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military materiel toward and into South Vietnam, (II) Communist-initiated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements, and (III) other developments affecting Communist military capabilities in Indochina.

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I. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies

A. Personnel Infiltration and Redeployments

1. Three new regular combat infiltration groups were detected entering the pipeline in North Vietnam during the reporting period. These groups, with a total strength of about 1,700 personnel, are destined for the coastal areas of central South Vietnam. Fragmentary information suggests that the North Vietnamese may also be moving or planning to move still other combat infiltration groups southward. In addition to these regular combat groups, eight smaller groups of civil and military specialists--totalling some 125 personnel--were detected moving south in the Laos Panhandle and Cambodia.

2. Since the 15 June effective date of the Paris Communique (the "second" ceasefire), at least 3,200 North Vietnamese personnel have started the infiltration trip south. About 2,700 of these have been combat personnel, and 500 have been civil and military

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specialists. The cumulative total of southward moving infiltrators since the 27 January "original" ceasefire now stands at almost 54,000 personnel. Of these, some 25,000 were in the infiltration pipeline traveling south as of 27 January, while almost 29,000 have started south since that date. (ANNEX B, [redacted])

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[redacted] contains a more detailed discussion of the evidence pertaining to infiltration which was received during the reporting period.)

3. Recently received evidence indicates that the 88th Regiment of the NVA 308B Infantry Division may be returning from northern Laos to North Vietnam. On 10 July the regiment was identified near the North Vietnamese border, considerably to the east of its former location in the Plaine des Jarres area. If the unit does return home, it would be the first combat unit known to have left northern Laos this rainy season, although an NVA engineering battalion also may have withdrawn several weeks ago (see our weekly violation report of 29 June 1973). The 88th Regiment's sister regiment, the 102nd, returned to North Vietnam from southern Laos in late May or early June. Both of these regiments had originally moved into Laos from North Vietnam in late 1972 or early 1973. Some NVA combat units have routinely rotated out of Laos in previous wet seasons, and then later returned. It is therefore possible that these two regiments will also return at the onset of the next dry season. We have no specific evidence, however, that they in fact will--or will not--return.

B. Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies

4. In the following paragraphs we examine the evidence received during the reporting period of North Vietnamese logistic activity in support of Communist forces throughout Indochina. Geographically we move from north to south, discussing first NVA logistic activity in southern North Vietnam, and then in northern Laos, southern Laos, Cambodia, and finally within South Vietnam itself. It is impossible to state categorically that all of this activity is in violation of the Vietnam or Laos settlement agreements, but

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much of it is. Even the activity within North Vietnam often reflects the movement of supplies which are soon to leave North Vietnam for the south. Similarly, Communist logistic activity which we observe wholly within South Vietnam often reflects supplies which have recently entered the country.

North Vietnam

5. Logistic activity within North Vietnam continued at the same moderately high levels observed in the past several weeks. Cargo movements in the Vinh area again included the transfer of ammunition between units subordinate to the major NVA logistic entity there. On 4 July, 12-15 vehicles were detected transporting various types of ammunition, including 122-mm. rockets, to an unlocated storage facility, and on 10 July nearly 18 tons of small arms ammunition were observed in transit between two logistic units.

6. In addition to the observed shuttling of cargo around Vinh, the flow of supplies from an NVA logistic unit northwest of Vinh to another south of Quang Khe in the southern Panhandle has continued during recent weeks. A report of 4 July indicates some 1,600 tons of weapons and ammunition were to be moved between these two units, and on 10 July 41 vehicles were observed transporting 90 tons of dried foodstuffs between these two points.

7. The movement of NVA supply vehicles through the area between Quang Khe and the DMZ also continues, although at lower levels than in previous weeks. On 4 July, 25 southbound and 21 northbound vehicles crossed the Troc River at a ferry southwest of Quang Khe.

Northern Laos

8. New evidence of construction activity in northern Laos--most of it apparently military related--became available during the week. A new spur road extending for 2 miles north of Route 7 (the

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major route crossing the northern Plaine des Jarres) has been built since late April and connects the route with a probable billeting and storage area containing 18 buildings. There were also two possible military-related installations detected near Khang Khay: one had 12 buildings which may be barracks and 18 other buildings, and the second had 27 buildings in the early stages of construction.

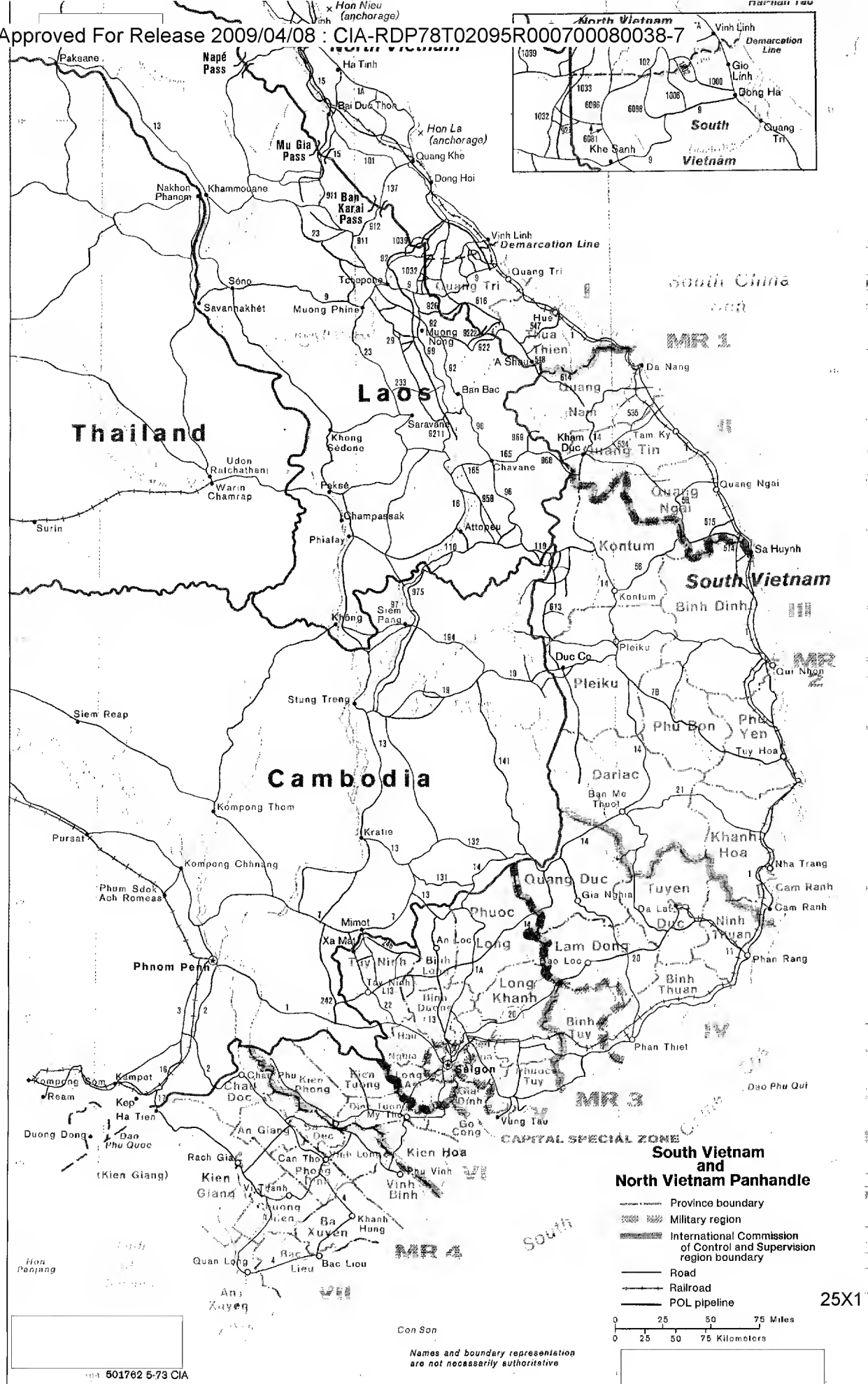
9. Communist logistic activity continued on Route 7 during late June. Late evidence indicates that on 29 June, there were five 130-mm. field guns and two 122-mm. howitzers parked in traveling mode in a parking area along the route southwest of Ban Ban. There was no indication as to whether this artillery was being moved to the east (back to North Vietnam) or to the west.

Southern Laos/Cambodia

10. The level of Communist logistic activity in the Laos Panhandle remains low--as would be expected at the height of the rainy season--but some cargoes are still being moved. On the night of 6 July, for example, 70 vehicles were detected on the major roads from Muong Nong south to the tri-border area (primarily Routes 99, 92, 96 and 96/110). Other reports indicate that NVA storage facilities in the Panhandle still have considerable stockpiles on hand. On 8 July a group of sites along Route 99 south of Muong Nong had at least 120 tons of supplies on hand. (The map on the following page shows the roads and route numbers mentioned in this report.)

South Vietnam

11. Although evidence from South Vietnam was sparse during the week, available indications continue to point to heavy logistic activity in the northern and western portions of the country. 103 cargo vehicles were observed on Route 9 between the Laos/South Vietnam border and the junction with Route 6088 on 6 July, and on the previous day 160 cargo trucks were active between unspecified locations in



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northern Quang Tri Province. An NVA logistic unit operating in the new Communist supply corridor in western South Vietnam was reported on 9 July to have shipped nearly 7,500 tons of rice over an unspecified period and as of 11 July one of the major NVA storage facilities on Route 548 north of A Shau had about 8,000 tons of cargo on hand, 75% of it rice.

II. Communist-Initiated Combat Activity in South Vietnam and Laos

A. South Vietnam

12. In South Vietnam, the total number of Communist-initiated ceasefire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 27 January, 15 June, and for the last week (10-16 July) are shown below:

<u>Military Region</u>	<u>Total Since 27 January "Ceasefire"</u>		<u>Total Since 15 June "Ceasefire"</u>		<u>Last Week (10-16 Jul)</u>	
	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
MR 1	1,074	3,606	49	247	3	33
MR 2	329	2,300	65	446	13	106
MR 3	442	2,973	40	397	14	117
MR 4	763	7,090	85	924	5	144
Totals	2,608	15,969	239	2,014	35 (39)	400 (352) <u>1/</u>

1/ Denotes totals of previous week.

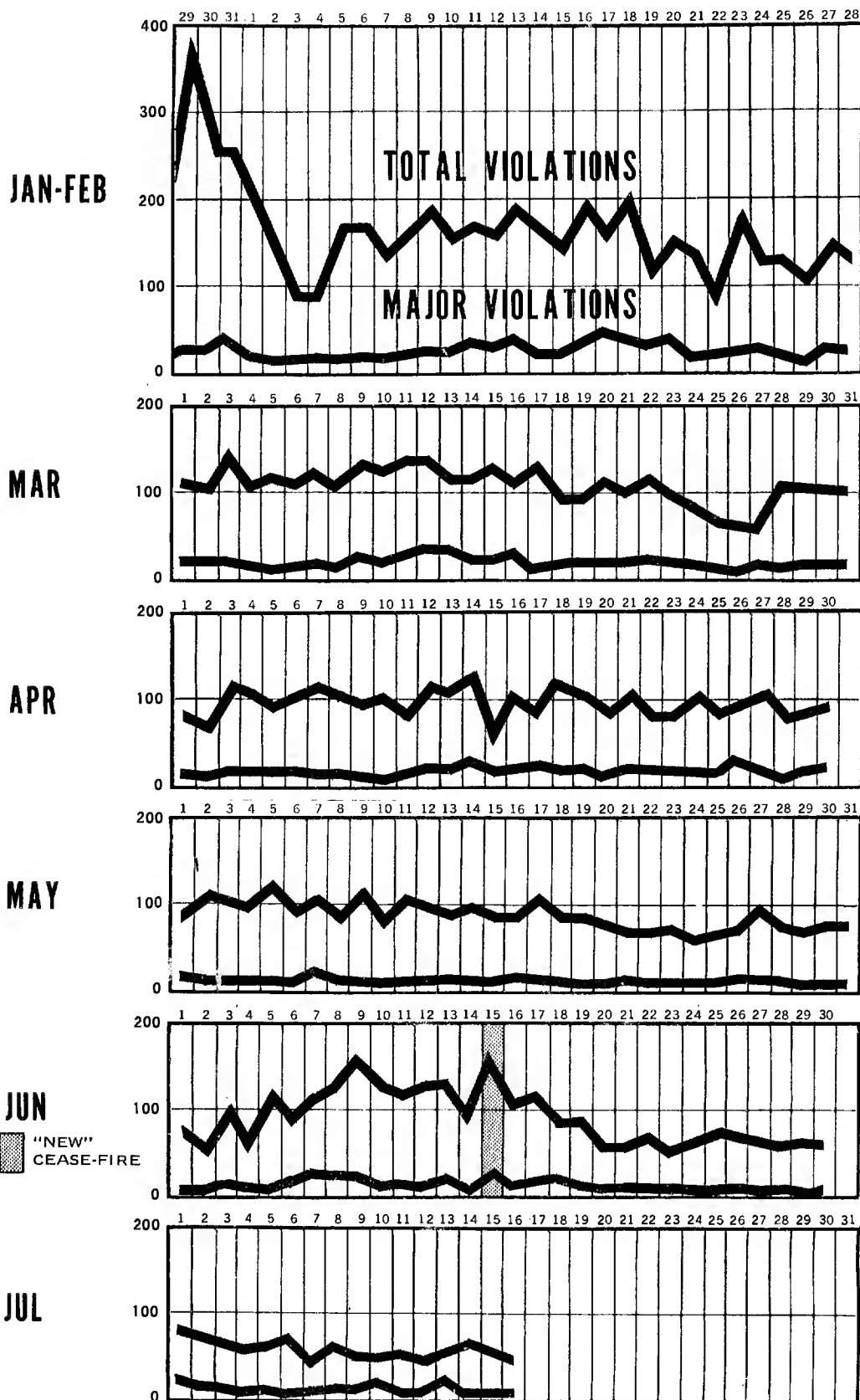
13. Some of these violations may have been initiated by GVN forces rather than Communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The table above and the chart on the following page, however, do show fairly accurately the

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CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

(28 JANUARY 1973 TO THE PRESENT)



trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the ceasefire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated in objective fashion.

B. Laos

14. Communist initiated combat activity in Laos remained at a low level during the reporting period except in Lao Military Region III (the central Panhandle). Two government positions in northern Military Region III were abandoned under enemy pressure leaving about 2,800 refugees under enemy control, and a government battalion southwest of Muong Phalane reported that it was being subjected to continued enemy harassment and that it had been forced to relocate several times.

III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Military Capabilities

Tropical Storm Anita Impinges on Logistic Operations

15. Communications intercepts from Communist units along the coast in both North and South Vietnam and in the central Laos Panhandle indicate that recent tropical storm Anita has hindered NVA logistic operations and has forced Communist units to introduce emergency procedures. Anita approached the Vietnam coast near Danang late on 7 July, then swept northward up the Tonkin Gulf and dissipated inland over northern Laos on 9 July. Those units hit hardest have been Binh Trams 12 in Quang Tri Province and 26 south of Quang Khe, although the effects were apparently felt as far north as Thanh Hoa Province. COMINT has referred to impassable roads, damaged bridges, ferries, and fords, and the emergency evacuation of cargo from storage areas to save it from destruction. As of 9 July, the 41st Engineer Regiment located on Route 548 in western South Vietnam had embarked on a "construction offensive" aimed at repairing the damage done by the rains.

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Communists Continue to Emphasize Local Supply
Procurement in South Vietnam

16. There is growing evidence that in order to promote increased procurement of supplies locally, the Communists have ordered many of their combat forces in South Vietnam to become self-sufficient in food and other non-military goods. For example, an intercepted message of 2 July indicates that elements of the NVA 711th Division in southern MR-1 were advised that higher headquarters would not issue any rice to them in the future. In the B-3 Front, a high-ranking North Vietnamese officer reportedly emphasized recently that "the important mission confronting units of the B-3 Front was food production." Moreover, in the COSVN region two sources have reported that difficulties in obtaining rice from Cambodia led COSVN in mid-April to direct its subordinate rear service groups to develop rice sources within South Vietnam and to begin supplying food to main force units only. At the same time COSVN reportedly instructed province and district level units to become self-sufficient in foodstuffs. We do not have enough evidence at this point to judge the degree of success the Communists are having in this self-sufficiency campaign.

Communist Logistic Support for Civilians

17. Some of the recent logistic activity in northern South Vietnam appears related to Communist efforts to establish civilian settlements along the new western supply corridor. Photography [REDACTED] revealed that seven villages containing a total of more than 100 huts had been erected in the A Shau Valley since mid-May. South of the A Shau, according to a recent rallier, North Vietnam is providing construction materials for the "economic development and resettlement of North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese personnel" in and around the town of Ben Giang at the junction of Routes 614 and 14 in western Quang Nam Province. Reportedly, the new residents will continue receiving food supplies for about six months, and thereafter are expected to be self-sufficient.

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18. Communist resettlement aid is also reportedly being extended to civilians in both the highlands and northern coastal areas of MR-2. In the B-3 Front, Viet Cong units in Darlac Province reportedly have been receiving daily shipments of farming equipment, including plows, tools, generators, water pumps, and rice-processing machines. Additionally, the VC reportedly had received bulldozers in early June which were being used to clear roads and farmland. Some clearing activity of this type has been confirmed in Darlac Province by aerial reconnaissance. In coastal Binh Dinh Province, Communist cadre were reportedly instructed in late June to prepare a number of "reception stations" which are to be used to house civilian farmers who "have volunteered to come from North Vietnam to cultivate the land and set up production areas." At present, the scope of this activity appears to be fairly modest. Unless it is greatly expanded, it is not likely to encourage the movement of large numbers of South Vietnamese into Communist-controlled areas.

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ANNEX B

Post-Ceasefire Infiltration of North
Vietnamese Personnel to the South

1. Between 12 and 17 July, three regular infiltration groups--1042, 1060, and 1085--with a total of some 1,700 men, were initially detected entering the system in North Vietnam. The designators of all of these groups do not follow the previously established pattern of numerical sequence within the lxxx (VC MR 5) series. The last group detected in the lxxx series was Group 1005, which was observed in southern Laos in mid-February. It is possible that these groups are anomalies--as yet unexplained--within the current numbering system. It is more likely, however, that the numbering system is being altered, and that additional groups of combat personnel may be infiltrating to the south as yet undetected. Pending further clarification, only the groups 1042, 1060, and 1085 will be accepted as reported and no allowance will be made for gap-filling undetected groups.

2. Eight special-purpose groups, totalling about 125 civilian and military personnel, were also noted in the pipeline in southern Laos and Cambodia since 6 July. Table 1, below, summarizes our current information on infiltration starts from North Vietnam.

Table 1

INFILTRATION STARTS: COMBAT TROOPS LEAVING
NORTH VIETNAM FOR THE SOUTH*

	1972-1973 <u>Infiltration Year**</u>
Total Infiltration Starts Through 30 June in the "Infiltration Year"	94,000 (1 Sep 72- 30 Jun 73)
(broken down by area of destination)	
MR Tri-Thien-Hue	33,000 (CIA), 36,000 (DOD)
MR 5	9,000
B-3 Front	14,000 (CIA), 11,000 (DOD)
COSVN	26,000
Southern Laos and MR 559	12,000
Total Infiltration Starts From 1 Through 15 July	1,700
(broken down by area of destination)	
MR Tri-Thien-Hue	0
MR 5	1,700
B-3 Front	0
COSVN	0
Southern Laos and MR 559	0

*This Table includes only combat infiltration groups, and omits special purpose groups. There are minor differences between the DOD and the CIA on the number of personnel destined for specific areas listed on this table. Where such differences exist, both the CIA and the DOD estimates are given.

**For accounting purposes, we arbitrarily define the "infiltration year" as beginning on 1 September, which roughly coincides with the start of the dry season along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in the Laos Panhandle each year.

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